



The Joint Sector Group

To all German
wagons keepers,
Railway Undertakings
and workshops

Brussels, 08.03.2010

Start of the European Visual Inspection Program on wheelset axles

Dear Ladies and Sirs,

the European Task Force on Freight wagon/axle maintenance, installed in the consequence of the Viareggio Accident and the EU Rail Safety Conference last year, is backed by the expertise of the Joint Sector organisations CER, ERFA, UIP, UIRR and UNIFE, bringing together the knowledge of all Sector partners to define an appropriate bundle of measures.

The so called "Joint Sector Group" worked out a Sector Program which was approved by all present European and National authorities, among them the European Railway Agency (ERA), in the last ERA Task Force meeting in end of december 2009 to improve further, where necessary, the maintenance of wheelset axles and to harmonise safety relevant parameters for these components operated all across Europe. The European Commission has been informed about the results of the working group.

The execution of this program is of highest importance for the credibility and safety of the Rail Freight Sector. All authorities expect us to now deliver the actions laid down in the adopted program. The contents and experiences of this program will be, in a later stage, integrated into the European Standard for wheelset/axle maintenance EN 15 313 and also in the GCU. **In the meantime, the Sector program is binding as a self-commitment for all Sector members and has to be implemented from now on. The process will be monitored by the NSAs.**

The non-execution of this program could, in the worst case, lead to traffic restrictions or additional checks of the wheelsets by the National Authorities or the refusal of railway undertakings to operate wagons of keepers not executing this program.



The three main elements of the Joint Sector Program are:

- 1) a visual inspection program of the European axle fleet in freight wagon light maintenance workshops, according to the criteria laid down in the **European Visual Inspection Catalogue (EVIC)** worked out by the Joint Sector Group. These inspections must be recorded (for all details, see attached documents).
- 2) a more in-depth investigation with non-destructive testing methods of samples of axles operating in defined domains (e.g. corrosive environments)
- 3) the European-wide implementation of systematic traceability of wheelset maintenance data

In 2010, the ERA Task Force will regularly evaluate the experience gained from these measures and decide on potential further actions.

The second and the third element will be treated further in the Joint Sector Group.

The first element (the implementation of the EVIC program) has to start in all European countries from 01.04.2010 onwards and will be organised integrating so called "Joint EVIC bodies" in each country, comprising up to three responsables (one from each association UIP, CER, ERFA).

Please refer to the table included in the attached EVIC implementation guide for the current state of nominees per country (end feb 2010). These responsables act jointly for highest synergy in implicating all Sector members **and are your contact persons per Country**.

You as Railway Undertaking, Wagon keeper and workshops are responsible for the execution of the EVIC program. We thank you very much for taking over this important responsibility and are looking forward a fruitful cooperation with you. We are extremely dependent on your support for this activity which is under strong focus of the European authorities and must be led to a success. As said, in case of non-fulfilment of this program, the potential of individual measures of the National Safety Authorities is high.

The EVIC criteria will be integrated in the GCU as soon as possible (already started).

The process for the EVIC inspections is as follows:

- the EVIC inspections must be mandated to the contracted workshops by the keepers or by the Railway Undertakings (in case of repairs done on the base of GCU - in all own and foreign workshops)
- the keeper must take over the costs for executing the EVIC program (inspection and tracing) and potentially for a required change of the wheelset
- the Joint EVIC body per country will deliver to you the EVIC document it in the required national language



- the keepers and the RUs (ordering the Visual Inspection from the workshops) hand over the document to the workshops
- the executing workshop adds the required national and local working rules as well as all supporting further instructions on/for the workshop level

The task of the Keepers, Railway Undertakings and workshops is to

- execute the EVIC program in light maintenance (according to the criteria in the EVIC and the EVIC Implementation Guide) **=> workshops**
- to record the results of the EVIC inspections per keeper **=> workshops**
- to send the recorded results per keeper monthly to the keepers / Railway Undertakings **=> workshops**
- to summarize monthly the collected results and send them to the Joint EVIC bodies **=> keepers, RUs**

As we know that all necessary actions cannot be described sufficiently in just this letter, **we invite you to an information meeting**. The meeting will include all necessary informations and also practical instructions on freight wagons. **The meeting will be held on**

25 march 2010 (approx. 10 am to 3.30 pm)

at EuroMaint GmbH, Delitzsch workshop, Delitzsch Germany (near Leipzig)

Please refer to the attached application form for deadline and further details. All other instructions (as hotel indications a.s.o.) will be given after application.

We thank you very much for your support and looking forward your strong participation at the proposed training session.

Please do not hesitate to contact **hartmann@vpihamburg.de** in case of any further questions.

CER
Dr. Jens Engemann
JSG Chairman

ERFA
Dr. Johannes Nicolin
Expert

UIP
Mr Joachim Wirtgen
Expert

UIRR
Mr Martin Burkhardt
Expert

UNIFE
Mr. Eric Fontanel
General Manager

annexes:

- communication on ERA Task Force results
- Viareggio Joint Sector Program and documents
- EVIC 2.11 english
- EVIC implementation guide 2.12 english
- EVIC traceability sheets (xls)
- application form for the training meeting